



HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE REPUBLICANS *BUDGET RECONCILIATION MARKUP* ***Amendment Summary***

Combatting Democrats' Tax Hikes on Farm Families

A Motion to Postpone to a Day Certain offered by Rep. Austin Scott (R-GA), would have postponed consideration of the Committee Print until September 20, 2021. Members of the Committee were jammed by considering this significant spending bill without the ability to vet the need and purpose of the legislation, including the nearly \$25 billion omitted from the measure prior to markup and set to be added to the broader reconciliation package at a time and place determined by Democrat leadership. The Committee markup was also conducted prior to having full knowledge of the tax “pay-fors” which by all accounts will be devastating to farm families, as argued by Republicans and many Democrat Committee Members. The Democrats moved to table Rep. Scott’s motion to avoid taking the vote. Ranking Member Thompson then raised the question of consideration which they were forced to vote on.

Mr. Thompson’s Question of Consideration was voted down by a vote of 26-24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Randy Feenstra (R-IA), would create a mechanism to ensure that farmers, ranchers, and other members of the Agricultural value chain are not inadvertently harmed by any tax increases proposed by the underlying legislation. The amendment would require the Secretary to certify that the legislation would not raise taxes on agricultural businesses before the Secretary could spend any funds. It would also permit any agricultural business which did see price increases to seek repayment for the losses.

Despite the Administration’s ongoing rhetorical happy-talk, many agricultural businesses repeatedly pointed out the devastating consequences of the myriad tax proposals offered to pay for this bloated plan. Whether the Administration’s intent to target rural businesses was intentional or a byproduct of poor policies, Mr. Feenstra’s amendment would have provided a mechanism to guarantee to vulnerable farms, ranches, and other agricultural businesses that they would not be harmed.

This amendment was ruled not germane and the Chair’s ruling was sustained by a vote of 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Michelle Fischbach (R-MN), would establish the Sense of the Committee that it is opposed to the proposed tax policies which would raise taxes on farmers, ranchers, and other small businesses.

This amendment would have allowed Committee members to demonstrate a shared commitment to protecting farmers, ranchers, and rural small businesses from new, unaffordable tax burdens. The amendment echoed the concerns shared the Chairman in his June 2nd letter to the President, in which he called noted that the “proposed changes in tax provisions that could hurt our family farmers, ranchers and small businesses.”

This amendment was ruled not germane and the Chair’s ruling was sustained by a vote of 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Tracey Mann (R-KS), would establish a sense of the Committee that burdensome taxation places American farmers and ranchers at a competitive disadvantage in the global marketplace and asks that any changes to stepped-up basis must provide full exemptions for family farms and small businesses, including essential protections to define an eligible family member, to permit all common farming, agricultural, and business practices, provide equal treatment for all heirs, and not to impose a deferred tax obligation on any eligible heirs.

The amendment would have allowed Committee members to demonstrate a shared commitment to protecting farmers, ranchers, and rural small businesses from the worst consequences of the Administrations flawed tax policies. The amendment echoed the concerns shared by 8 members of the Committee in a May 6th letter to the Democratic Leadership, in which they called for “full exemptions for these family farms and small businesses.”

This amendment was ruled not germane and the Chair’s ruling was sustained by a vote of 27 to 24.

Subtitle B: Forestry

An amendment offered by Rep. Vicky Hartzler (R-MO), would eliminate the \$2.25 billion provided to support the development of the Civilian Climate Corps, a duplicative initiative which is part of President Biden’s green job creation agenda. However, this program would be duplicative of the Job Corps run by the Department of Labor, in collaboration with the United States Forest Service (USFS) which runs Civilian Conservation Centers. Through the Job Corps, young adults may earn a high school diploma, earn vocational certification in over 30 trades, and earn careers in conservation, forestry, and wildland firefighting.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #1, was voted down 27 to 23.

An amendment offered by Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-CA), would simplify the forestry provisions in the bill to ensure that funding and resources are allocated to forest management and hazardous fuel reduction activities. Secondly, the amendment prioritizes the acres most at risk of devastating wildfire using Forest Service data. Finally, the amendment also provides new authorities for landscape scale restoration and post fire salvage sales. Because the forestry subtitle contains a variety of impractical restrictions and overemphasizes non-commercial projects, the legislation is unworkable and will do little to reduce the threat of wildfire. The subtitle also provides billions of dollars for non-essential activities that would not address forest health, hazardous fuels reduction, or the wildfire crisis.

This standalone amendment was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-CA), would direct an additional \$500 million to restoration work for post-fire areas. Specifically, this funding would support soil stabilization, salvage logging when necessary, and the replanting of trees and vegetation for long term regeneration. Because of the devastating fire seasons in recent years, tens of millions of acres require restoration and stabilization work. This legislation, as drafted, will not provide the necessary funding for post-fire projects that will improve forest health and restoration.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #1, was voted down 27 to 23.

An amendment offered by Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-CA), would substitute language in Section 11001 (Civilian Climate Corps) and provide that funding (\$2.25 billion) for staffing retention, salary increases, and workforce needs for personnel fighting fires on National Forest System lands. While many firefighters are overextended and underpaid by the Forest Service, firefighter retention continues to be a challenge for the agency. In some states, such as California, the Forest Service has difficulty retaining firefighters because of low wages and while state fire agencies offer higher pay.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #1, was voted down 27 to 23.

An amendment offered by Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-CA), would substitute language in Section 11001 (Civilian Climate Corps) and provide that funding (\$2.25 billion) for rapid fire suppression activities on National Forest System lands with the intent of “keeping all new fire starts under 10 acres.” A number of recent wildfires, such as the Lava and Tamarack fires, were not suppressed quickly enough and subsequently exploded in size due to winds and geography. With additional funding and direction, the Forest Service could be engaging more fires earlier to prevent them from becoming highly destructive megafires.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #1, was voted down 27 to 23.

Subtitle C: Rural Development and Energy

An amendment offered by Rep Jim Baird (R-IN), would require anerobic digesters to be included as “underutilized renewable energy technologies” for access to the new funds under the Rural Energy for America Programs (REAP). Anerobic digesters are a critical emerging technology for farms to process waste, generate power, and develop new revenue streams.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #2, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Randy Feenstra (R-IA), would require that any biofuels equipment purchased through the funds provided in Section 12006 would permit the year-round availability of higher ethanol blends, including E15 and E85, and biodiesel blends up to B100.

The amendment made no substantive changes to the underlying legislation except to add supply of year-round higher blend biofuels as an eligible purpose of the grant program. This change would have ensured that the new biofuel infrastructure program had the authorities necessary to support an expanding biofuels market.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #2, was voted down 27 to 24.

Subtitle D: Research and Urban Agriculture

An amendment offered by Rep. Chris Jacobs (R-NY), would make research to eliminate or minimize the spread of the spotted lanternfly and its harmful effects on the environment eligible for climate-related funding from the Agricultural Research Service (ARS). The spotted lanternfly is an invasive species that was first found in the United States in 2014 and has the potential to cause widespread damage to forests and crops. While originally found in Pennsylvania, it has quickly spread to several states in the eastern U.S. This amendment would provide funding to ARS to carry out research to help stop the spread of the spotted lanternfly and eventually eradicate this invasive species.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #3, was [voted down](#) 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Rick Crawford (R-AR), would provide \$5 billion to create a fund to provide low interest bridge loans to rural utility providers experiencing losses during an emergency. The loans would offset revenue losses from unpaid bills and lost demand. It further authorizes the Secretary to forgive a limited amount of unrecoverable losses.

The amendment would have provided a lifeline to struggling rural utility providers who must provide their essential services, despite any ongoing crisis disrupting their customers' ability to pay their bills or the demand for services. The COVID-19 pandemic led to enormous losses across many small rural utility providers, many of whom lack the financial cushion or access to credit necessary to weather a catastrophic revenue loss.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #2, was [voted down](#) 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Jim Baird (R-IN), would expand the types of projects eligible for funding through the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA). This program was established in the bipartisan 2018 Farm Bill to help fund advanced research and development projects related to mechanization in the specialty crop industry, plant pests and diseases, and veterinary countermeasures to biological threats. The Committee print funds this program for the first time; however, the only projects eligible for funding are for research related to climate change. If adopted, this amendment would have included "qualified products or projects" as eligible for funding to ensure this program was implemented as intended by Congress.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #3, was [voted down](#) 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Randy Feenstra (R-IA), would add contagious animal pathogens as a priority for the funding allocated to the Agricultural Research Service (ARS). Over the years, the agriculture industry has been susceptible to a variety of contagious animal pathogens including African Swine Fever, Foot and Mouth Disease, and Avian Influenza. The Committee print allocates money to ARS for climate-related research but fails to take into consideration the research needed to ensure our producers have the tools needed to respond to both existing and emerging contagious animal pathogens.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #3, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Randy Feenstra (R-IA), would add biofuel conversion projects eligible for the funding allocated to carry out agriculture climate research on biomass. The Biomass Research and Development Initiative was designed to carry out research on and development and demonstration of biofuels and biobased products. The Committee print specifically calls out projects related to pyrolysis and biochar; however, it was unclear if biofuel conversion is eligible. This amendment would ensure that biofuel conversion research is eligible for this funding to help carry out this critical research.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #3, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Rick Allen (R-GA), would strike all climate-change related research in the Committee print. The research programs in the Farm Bill ensure American agriculture is at the forefront of innovation and productivity through cutting-edge research. While the Committee print provided funding for several critical research programs, it limited the research to climate-related research. While further investments in agriculture research are important, only prioritizing climate-related research is shortsighted and not nearly broad enough to ensure the U.S. continues to have the safest, most abundant food supply.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #3, was voted down 27 to 24.

Subtitle E: Miscellaneous

An amendment offered by Republican Leader Glenn Thompson (R-PA), would strike subtitles A through E and insert legislation pertaining to agricultural disaster assistance and broadband – both of which were previously voice voted out of committee. This amendment would have replaced the partisan, unvetted proposals in the underlying legislation with the two proposals which have been considered and drafted through regular order this year, the *Broadband Internet Connections for Rural America Act* and the *WHIP+ Reauthorization Act*. The two pieces of legislation have been fully vetted, carefully considered, and unanimously supported by every member of the Committee.

Reliable, effective broadband is recognized across the Committee as one of the most important needs in rural America. The Committee has long held that USDA, with its deep reach into rural America, provides critical assistance to rural communities and providers seeking to bridge the digital divide.

This standalone amendment was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Dusty Johnson (R-SD), would provide \$75 million for African Swine Fever and other animal disease prevention and emergency preparedness measures as requested by industry stakeholders. On July 27, 2021, detections of African Swine Fever were confirmed in the Dominican Republic—the first detections in the Western hemisphere and the closest to the U.S. in approximately 40 years. If the disease spreads to the neighboring islands of Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands, there will almost certainly be enormous trade implications that will devastate the U.S. pork industry and negatively impact the broader agricultural economy.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #5, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Kat Cammack (R-FL), would provide producers an opportunity to update the base acres utilized to calculate farm program payments. Many of the records in use today are relics of the crops produced in the 1980s and producers have not had an opportunity to update them to reflect the current production or addition of new farmland. This is an example of one of many enhancements to the farm safety net that could have been accomplished in this exercise.

This amendment was offered and withdrawn.

An amendment offered by Rep. Kat Cammack (R-FL), would prohibit the implementation of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit increase until the Government Accountability Office (GAO) completed their investigation, initiated by Ranking Members Thompson and Boozman on August 13, 2021. The Department released their update on August 16, 2021— after a Sunday announcement in *The New York Times* — which increases the SNAP benefit by 25 percent, effective October 01, 2021. This process was likely conducted in violation of the *Administrative Procedure Act*, particularly because it increases the ten-year Farm Bill baseline by \$254 billion, and also includes questionable shifts in policy and procedure that undue 45 years of precedent.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #4, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Kat Cammack (R-FL), would repeal waiver authorities associated with SNAP eligibility determinations found in the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act* (FFCRA). Despite businesses, schools, restaurants, and other public places being open, many State welfare agencies remain shuttered, using telephone interviews to solidify eligibility for safety net programs, instead of face-to-face interviews. Fraud investigators and agency officials have reported this shift has inhibited the ability of eligibility workers to accurately assess program qualifications. Nearly nineteen months after the start of the pandemic, it is time to return to standard operating procedures, ensuring not only do the most vulnerable receive benefits, but that those in need receive more individual services.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #4, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Jim Baird (R-IN), would direct \$100M in funds over five years to be used to enhance cybersecurity activities and preparedness at the Department. Improved cybersecurity infrastructure would protect sensitive data, personal information of Department employees and customers, and secure business information related to our Nation's food supply chain.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #5, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Jim Baird (R-IN), would prohibit any funds from the reconciliation instruction from being used until the confirmation of both a Chief Agricultural Negotiator and Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs. The Biden Administration, as of Friday, September 10, failed to nominate, let alone confirm, both a Chief Agricultural Negotiator and Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs. These two positions are the advocates for our producers, can assist the U.S. in becoming more competitive in trading relationships, and help us to establish new ones. Expanding upon and forging new trade agreements puts America's farmers and ranchers in a much more competitive position in foreign markets by expanding U.S. exports, creating additional jobs, and generating opportunities for communities across rural America.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #5, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Tracey Mann (R-KS), would provide \$250 million for a suite of trade promotion and development programs that enjoy broad bipartisan and industry support. The funding would be matched and bolstered by private industry funding, and would help counter the logistical delays, skyrocketing freight costs, and unpredictability in international shipping, which have made U.S. agricultural products less competitive overseas during the pandemic.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #5, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Jim Hagedorn (R-MN), would repeal Section 2301 of the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act* (FFCRA), reinstating the time limit, and subsequently the work requirement, for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD). We are failing Main Street by not expecting productivity from able-bodied, childless SNAP recipients between the ages of 18-49. Nearly 70% of this population reports zero income, so either they are working undisclosed jobs, or simply not engaging in a workforce that so desperately needs them. At a time where open jobs exceed the number of individuals seeking employment, it is more important than ever to reinstate a 20 hour-per-week work or training requirement for these adults.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #4, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Jim Hagedorn (R-MN), would prevent the Secretary of Agriculture from continuing to delay the disbursement of funds needed to make pork producers whole who suffered losses during the peak of the pandemic. This Administration put a pause on the implementation of a regulation requiring these payments and has refused to provide clear direction as to its plans for addressing the issue moving forward.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #5, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Mary Miller (R-IL), would have prevented the underlying bill from going into effect. This bill is a partisan wish list that prioritizes pet projects over the needs of farmers, ranchers, foresters, and rural communities. In contrast, leading up to the 2018 Farm Bill, Republican Committee Leadership held over 100 public facing events with Members on both sides of the aisle to gather input and feedback from farmers, ranchers, and foresters.

This standalone amendment was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Austin Scott (R-GA), would amend Section 1101 of the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act* (FFCRA), changing the consecutive days of school closures warranting use of Pandemic-EBT from five to 15 days. The creation of Pandemic-EBT allowed States to provide additional EBT funds for students receiving free or reduced-price meals, however in recent months, certain red flags have come about, including eligibility (or lack thereof), and inequities among use. Congressional staff with lobbyist spouses are receiving cards in D.C. Households, regardless of income, in New York City, households received \$1320 per child, in two lump sum payments, no questions asked. Affluent families in Tennessee are receiving hundreds of dollars in benefits, by virtue of zip code. The Department's blasé response warrants action, and it is noted that Republican leadership of both this Committee and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform initiated an Office of the Inspector General investigation.

This amendment was offered and withdrawn.

An amendment offered by Rep. Austin Scott (R-GA), would instruct the Secretary to identify and issue payments to remaining eligible producers for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) and make payments within 60 days. Throughout 2021, USDA has continued to announce new programs or funds available for additional sectors and segments of the supply chain, yet there are still producers who have been awaiting assistance for more than a year.

This standalone amendment was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Michelle Fischbach (R-MN), would insert the bipartisan *Broadband Internet Connections for Rural America Act*, which passed the committee with unanimous bipartisan support. The amendment would utilize the unappropriated portion of funds remaining under the reconciliation instructions to provide \$24 billion for additional broadband infrastructure.

The amendment would have added the text of one of the two major bipartisan bills the Committee worked on this Congress related to improving and expanding the broadband activities at the Department. Reliable, effective broadband is recognized across the Committee as one of the most important needs in rural America. The Committee has long held that USDA, with its deep reach into rural America, provides critical assistance to rural communities and providers seeking to bridge the digital divide.

This standalone amendment was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Troy Balderson (R-OH), would restrict funding for the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA) until the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) makes a strategic plan publicly available. When establishing the program in the bipartisan 2018 Farm Bill, Congress required that USDA develop this plan within 360 days of enactment; however, a report is still not done nearly three years after enactment. Because of the lack of this plan, the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021* further directed USDA to develop this plan within 180 days of enactment. To date, no strategic plan has been completed, yet the Committee print would give this program \$380 million.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #3, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Dusty Johnson (R-SD), would broaden the scope of the \$300 million animal health funding provision in the American Rescue Plan (that is inexplicably limited to monitoring and surveillance of COVID in animals) to allow the funding to more appropriately be spent on a broader array of pressing animal disease threats like African Swine Fever.

This amendment, part of En Bloc #5, was voted down 27 to 24.

An amendment offered by Rep. Julia Letlow (R-LA), would appropriate \$8.5 billion to provide assistance to producers who suffered losses in 2020 and 2021 due to extreme weather events. This amendment was identical to legislation unanimously approved by the members of the committee on a voice vote in July. One of the biggest complaints about disaster assistance leveled by members of both parties is the delay it takes to get funds appropriated after the losses occur, yet for the second time this year, the Majority has passed up an opportunity to enact assistance via reconciliation, leaving many producers left in the lurch with no certainty about the future of their operation.

This standalone amendment was **voted down** 26 to 25.

An amendment offered by Rep. Scott DesJarlais (R-TN), would reduce funding across the Committee print by two-thirds. Senator Manchin has made it abundantly clear that he can only support \$1-\$1.5T in new spending; it appears he recognizes the magnificent amount of recent spending and its impact on consumers and our deficit. Changes to program funding should not be left to other committees or the Senate.

This standalone amendment was **voted down** 27 to 24.